

government based on the idea, based on the premise that you and I had the God-given right within ourselves to determine our own destiny. Freedom is no more than one generation away. It wasn't passed onto us in the bloodstream by our parents and neither was it passed onto our children by ourselves. Just as the whole point being the freedom, the freedom issue, the freedom of choice, I guess, Mr. President, that's where I'm really coming from. Just as the patrons and the parents of our Class I districts are fighting now, fighting for that freedom of choice, in some instances I wonder if they aren't fighting for their lives. To send those kids to schools where in most cases the quality of education is comparable, in some cases better, where there is a choice in the teacher selection, where the teacher-pupil ratio is lower, the selection of teachers, the per pupil cost lower, the teacher-pupil ratio even lower yet. Sure the tax levy is lower out there in many cases, you bet, because the school board members and the parents are out there washing the windows, they're making the playground equipment out there on their farms, in the shops. They are painting the buildings. They are pumping the sewers and they are making doggone sure that those kids get to school on time at no additional cost to their school district. The real spirit of this country still exists out there in the country. I'm convinced of it. When this nation's first...the pioneers first turned their eyes toward the west, you know, I don't think they demanded much of anything except freedom. They didn't demand that anybody take care of them, certainly not the state...

SPEAKER NICHOL: One minute.

SENATOR BARRETT: ...certainly not the Legislature, certainly not the Department of Education. You know they must have looked over those rolling plains as they crossed the Missouri River back here, looked out towards the Platte Valley and looked up to the blue skies and said, thanks, I can take it from here. No government in history ever gave to its citizens or forced upon its citizens, what those hard-working people with their sleeves rolled up, earned for themselves. And so for many years we are told that there was poverty, but there was opportunity. We're told that there were hardships, but there was also hope, but more importantly there was freedom and perhaps security, but more importantly, freedom, freedom that men had probably been looking for for maybe 6,000 years, who knows. We had a land